One of Fairbury's Greatest Volunteers

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Decatur Veatch was one of the pioneer farmers of the Fairbury area. He was born in 1819 in Harrison, Indiana. In 1846, he moved to Indian Grove Township. Miss Matilda R. Smith was born in 1827 in Franklin County, Kentucky. Matilda married Decatur Veatch in 1846. In 1870, Decatur Veatch went into business with John Virgin to import Percheron draft horses from France to Fairbury. They stayed in business together until 1873 when Decatur died. Mr. and Mrs. Decatur Veatch had 11 children.

One of the 11 children of Decatur and Matilda Veatch was William S. Veatch. He was born in Fairbury in 1864. William Veatch married Grace Clift (1870-1910). William and Grace Veatch had two children, Clift Decatur Veatch and Charles W. Veatch Sr.

Emma L. McDowell (1858-1937) was descended from another pioneer farmer. The first settler in the Fairbury area was Major Darnall, who settled south of Fairbury in 1829. Just three years later, in 1832, the McDowell family settled north of Fairbury. Emma was the granddaughter of John McDowell and Elizabeth Price, who arrived in 1832. Emma's parents were Oliver Perry McDowell and Emily Myer.

Albert Comstock Bartlett was also descended from two old Fairbury families. His parents were Cicero C. Bartlett (1826-1883) and Chloe Beach (1832-1895). A.C. Bartlett married Emma L. McDowell in Fairbury in 1878. One of their children was Louise B. Bartlett. Louise was born in 1895 in Fairbury.

The marriage of Charles W. Veatch Sr. and Louise B. Bartlett in 1916 brought together several of the founding families of the Fairbury area. Charles and Louise Veatch had two children. Charles Veatch Jr. was born in 1926, and Bernice L. Veatch was born in 1929. Bernice L. Veatch never married. She died in Watseka in 2011.

Charles Veatch Jr. grew up in Fairbury and attended local schools. He was Livingston County's first Eagle Scout.

Charles W. Veatch Sr. established a real estate and insurance company in Fairbury. When his son, Charles Veatch Jr., filled out his World War II draft registration card, he gave his address as 206 West Elm Street in Fairbury. His home phone number was 512, and he was working at Walton's Department Store.

Charles Veatch Jr. entered the U.S. Army Infantry and Engineers in February of 1945 at Fort Sheridan, Illinois. He served until he was discharged in March of 1946 at Camp Grant in Rockford, Illinois. After the war was over, Charles Veatch Jr. had planned on attending the University of Illinois. But during the war, his mother died, and his father

suffered a heart attack. He decided not to attend college and to work in his father's business.

Eula Mae Bess was the daughter of Ernest R. Bess and Helen M. Snyder. Eula Mae attended Illinois State Normal University and one year at Wesleyan University studying voice. She sang in the choir of the Baptist churches in Fairbury and Bloomington.

Shortly after finishing his military service, Charles Veatch Jr. married Eula Mae Bess in 1948. Charles and Eula Mae Veatch had four children in Fairbury. They were Scott, Seth, Sarah, and Susan.

Although he was working full-time in his father's insurance and real estate business and busy raising four children, Charles Veatch Jr. was an extraordinary civic volunteer in the 1950s in Fairbury. He was active in the Fairbury Mausoleum Association, the Masonic Lodge, the Red Cross, and the Jaycees. He was also very actively involved in the Fairbury Methodist Church and was a member of the Board of Directors.

In early 1957, Charles Veatch Jr. tackled his most ambitious project. In that era, Fairbury did not have a swimming pool. The Fairbury Jaycees did a public survey and found both citizens and community groups wanted to build a swimming pool in Fairbury. As a result, the Fairbury Swimming Pool association was formed. Charles Veatch was named President.

In the Summer of 1957, a public fund-raising drive began to raise $60,000. In September of 1957, the Fairbury Community Swimming Pool Association announced they had purchased land to build a new swimming pool. They bought two acres on the west side of First Street just north of the city limits and south of the Everett Crews residence.

The grand opening of the new swimming pool was held on Memorial Day, 1958. More than 300 citizens attended the event. An hour and ten-minute program by the University of Illinois Swimming team was highlighted by diving exhibitions from the high dive board. On opening day, 274 people swam in the new pool. Because of the efforts of Charles Veatch Jr. and many other local volunteers, Fairbury got a swimming pool. Charles Veatch Jr. was a certified Red Cross swimming and diving instructor. After the Fairbury pool opened, he gave swimming lessons to local children.

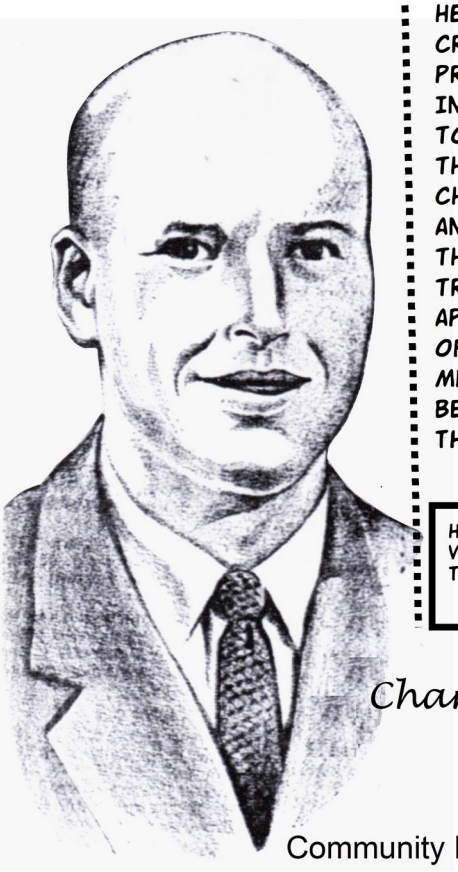
In the Fall of 1960, Charles Veatch Jr. and his wife moved from Fairbury to Monterey, California. In California, he was an insurance broker in the Monterey and Carmel areas. Charles continued to be active in community affairs in California. He was a member of the Kiwanis Club and a President of the Monterey Peninsula Association of Independent Insurance Agents and Brokers. Charles Veatch Jr. was also a Marshal at the AT&T Pro-Am at Pebble Beach, California. He also marshaled at the U.S. Open golf tournament in 1992.

Charles Veatch Jr. died in California in 1995 at the age of 69. He was initially buried in the El Carmelo Cemetery in Pacific Grove, California. His wife, Eula Mae Veatch,

passed away in 2006. Before she died, Eula Mae had her husband's body exhumed and cremated. Eula Mae and the ashes of her husband were interred in the Fairbury Mausoleum. Charles Veatch Sr. and his wife were also interred in the Mausoleum.

A review of Fairbury history reveals the town has a long history of citizens volunteering in community groups to improve Fairbury. Charles Veatch Jr. was an exemplary example of a Fairbury citizen who did his best to improve our community's quality of life.

CHARLES W. VEATCH JR., REALTOR AND INSURANCE AGENT IN PARTNERSHIP WITH HIS FATHER IN FAIRBURY, IS PRESIDENT OF THE FAIRBURY SWIMMING POOL ASSOCIATION; PRESIDENT OF THE FAIRBURY MAUSOLEUM ASSOCIATION; COMMANDER OF ST. PAUL COMMANDERY OF THE MASONIC LODGE, AND IS HOME SERVICE CHAIRMAN FOR INDIAN GROVE TOWNSHIP CHAPTER, AMERICAN RED CROSS.



HE WORKS WITH THE RED CROSS WATER SAFETY PROGRAM FOR THE LIVINGSTON COUNTY CHAPTER TOO. HE WAS TREASURER OF THE FAIRBURY METHODIST CHURCH FOR EIGHT YEARS AND NOW IS SECRETARY OF THE CHURCH'S BOARD OF TRUSTEES. UNTIL LAST APRIL, HE WAS PRESIDENT OF THE FAIRBURY JAYCEES. MR. VEATCH HAS RECENTLY BEEN SELECTED AS ONE OF THE FAIRBURY "YOUNG MEN OF THE YEAR."

HE IS A WORLD WAR II ARMY VETERAN. HE IS MARRIED AND THE FATHER OF THREE SMALL CHILDREN

Charles W. Veatch Jr.

FAIRBURY

Community Profile

1958 Pantagraph